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SUBJECT: DRC ELECTIONS: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

¶1. (U) The following is a series of frequently asked questions and answers regarding the DRC's October 29 presidential run-off and provincial assembly elections.

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Q: WHAT IS THE OCTOBER 29 ELECTION ABOUT?  
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¶2. (U) The October 29 election consists of two votes. The first is a presidential run-off between President Joseph Kabila and Vice President Jean-Pierre Bemba. The second is a ballot to elect the DRC's new provincial assemblies.

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Q: WHY IS THERE A RUN-OFF ELECTION?  
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¶3. (U) Thirty-two candidates ran for president in the July 30 contest. As no candidate received a majority of the vote, the DRC's electoral law stipulates the top two candidates proceed to a second round. Kabila won 44.8 of the vote and Bemba won 20 percent.

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Q: WHO ARE THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES?  
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¶4. (U) Kabila, age 35, is president of the DRC's transitional government established following the adoption of the 2003 Sun City Accords. He had originally been installed as president following the assassination of his father Laurent-Desire Kabila in 2001. Although running as an independent, Kabila is backed by the People's Party for Reconstruction and Democracy (PPRD) and other parties affiliated with the Alliance for the Presidential Majority (AMP).

¶5. (U) Bemba, age 43, is a former businessman from Equateur province, and the outgoing transitional vice president in charge of economic affairs. Bemba led the Ugandan-backed Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC) during the Congo's civil war in the late 1990s. The MLC is now a political party and leads the Union for the Nation alliance.

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Q: WHEN WILL PEOPLE VOTE?  
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¶6. (U) Voting begins October 29 at 0600 local time and will continue for 11 hours or until all voters waiting in line have cast their ballots.

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Q: WHEN WILL RESULTS BE KNOWN?  
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¶17. (U) Counting will begin immediately after polls close and results will be posted at individual voting sites after ballots are compiled by hand. Provisional presidential results are expected to be announced no later than November ¶19. Final results for the presidential contest will be published by November 30 by the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) after the Supreme Court has reviewed any challenges to the election.

¶18. (U) The CEI has accredited at least 200,000 political party witnesses plus national and international observers to monitor the polls. Party witnesses will likely be reporting results to their party headquarters long before the CEI announces them.

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Q: WHEN WILL THE PRESIDENT TAKE OFFICE?  
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¶19. (U) According to the CEI's electoral calendar, the new president is to be inaugurated by December 10, or 10 days after the publication of final results.

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Q: WHAT DOES THE ELECTION MEAN FOR THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT?  
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¶10. (U) The three-year transitional government will come to a close with the inauguration of the president, who will be the head of state. A new prime minister will serve as head of government, and will be selected by the president in consultation with the majority coalition of the National Assembly.

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Q: WHAT ARE THE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES?  
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¶11. (U) The provincial assemblies are a new level of government mandated by the DRC's new constitution adopted in a December 2005 referendum. They will be responsible for day-to-day provincial administration in areas such as development, commerce, and public debt. The provincial assemblies, once seated, will select members of the national Senate as well as provincial governors and vice governors.

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Q: HOW MANY POSITIONS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES?  
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¶12. (U) Voters will be choosing from among 13,467 candidates for 632 seats in the DRC's 11 provincial assemblies.

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Q: WHEN WILL PROVINCIAL RESULTS BE KNOWN?  
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¶13. (U) Provisional results for the provincial races are expected by December 5. Final results will be announced in mid-February, after appellate courts have ruled on any challenges. An additional 58 representatives will later be appointed to the assemblies from among traditional local

leaders.

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Q: HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL BE VOTING?  
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¶14. (U) The CEI registered 25.4 million as eligible voters in 2005. Of these, 17.9 million (70.54 percent) participated in the July 30 first-round presidential and legislation elections. Turnout is generally expected to be slightly higher for the October 29 contest. Members of the armed forces and the police are not allowed to vote, according to the DRC's electoral law.

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Q: HOW MUCH HAVE THESE ELECTIONS COST?  
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¶15. (U) The election budget is approximately 470 million USD. This does not include significant contributions from MONUC for transport and security.

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Q: HOW MUCH HAS THE USG CONTRIBUTED TO THE ELECTIONS?  
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¶16. (U) The USG has contributed 3 million USD directly to the CEI for its operational expenses. An additional 2 million USD has been provided through various USAID-sponsored programs for civic education, training of political parties, funding international observer missions, and providing technical advisers to the CEI.

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Q: HOW MUCH MATERIAL IS BEING USED FOR THESE ELECTIONS?  
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¶17. (U) Nearly 50 million ballots weighing some 1,600 tons have been printed in South Africa and delivered to the DRC's 50,045 planned voting sites by more than 75 round-trip flights. An additional 2,500 tons of other voting material, including ballot boxes, voting booths and paperwork, have also been delivered. The CEI will have nearly 250,000 electoral personnel nationwide working in voting stations, transporting material, and doing data entry at the provincial and national levels.

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Q: WHO IS PROVIDING SECURITY FOR THE ELECTIONS?  
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¶18. (U) A total of 70,637 Congolese National Police officers are charged with providing security at polling stations. Authorized members of the Congolese armed forces, supported by MONUC peacekeepers, will help secure sites in eastern DRC where police presence is minimal. MONUC has nearly 18,000 peacekeepers deployed throughout the country, mostly in eastern DRC. EUFOR has stationed 1,200 troops in the country, primarily in Kinshasa, but has also placed small reaction teams in Lubumbashi, Kananga and Mbandaka.  
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